



Gravesend Grammar School For Girls

Newsletter Number 1

October 2004

Dear Parents

The new school year is well under way. The main event of the Summer break was the publication of our GCSE, AS and A2 examination results. You will find these in your copy of the Head's Report which you will receive this week. Since the publication of the Head's Report we have received the outcome of re-marks, I am pleased to report that the grades have been moved up in the majority of cases. The most significant upgrading refers to the KS3 English SAT's results, they have changed to:

level 5: 2%, level 6: 37%, level 7: 60%, as we had expected.

New Staff

I am pleased to report that we have started the new year with a full complement of teaching staff:

- ❖ Mr McCorkell, Assistant Headteacher/Science College Director
- ❖ Miss Bastidas, Spanish
- ❖ Mrs Dixon, English, Head of Year 7
- ❖ Mr Dunn, Physics
- ❖ Miss Ormsby, KS3 Science Co-Ordinator
- ❖ Mrs Stent, Design and Technology
- ❖ Mrs Henderson, English (Part-time)
- ❖ Miss Finlay, French

We have also welcomed the addition of Mrs Murray, our new Cover and Examinations Officer, Mrs Freeman, Assessment Officer, Mrs Ring, ICT Technician and Mr Tapp, Design and Technology Technician.

These additional support staff have been appointed to take over from teaching staff some of the administrative tasks which teachers should no longer be employed to carry out.

Science College



We are now a Specialist Science College. Mr McCorkell has been appointed Science College Director. His role is to co-ordinate and lead all activities linked to the new status. His first task has been to co-ordinate our Launch Event due to take place on Friday 22 October. A leaflet has been distributed to your daughter informing you of what is planned for the day and asking for your support in

purchasing a Balloon card. We plan to release 5000 balloons!

Our priorities this year will be to continue to improve results, to extend extra-curricular opportunities, to arrange activities for and with our partner schools and the local community.

Training School

This term we welcome four new Associate Teachers who will be training with us for the first half of the year as part of the Kent & Medway Training scheme.

- Ms Lu (English)
- Mr Mulchandani (Maths)
- Mr Toeniges (MFL)
- Mr Peel-Yates

Uniform

Your daughters are looking very smart, thank you. I need to monitor closely your level of satisfaction regarding the service and quality provided by Longfield Wools. Please let me know if you are experiencing any difficulties. Longfield Wools have a monopoly on supplying our uniform and we have the right to expect the best.



Behaviour Management

Over the last year we have reviewed our Behaviour Management Policy, including the Code of Conduct, rewards systems and the sanctions, which we apply, to ensure that we are fair and consistent in what we do. Underpinning our philosophy is the belief that every member of the school community has certain rights, notably the right to dignity and respect, to be able to learn or teach and to be safe, physically and psychologically. To protect these rights, we have rules and routines, which need to be followed consistently.

Along with these rights, we all have the responsibility not to abuse them. This involves making choices, for which there are consequences, either positive or negative. The negative consequences are the sanctions, which we have devised, as far as possible, to fit the misdemeanour. The positives are the rewards. These principles together with the Code of Conduct, behaviour Offences in Lessons Procedure and Rewards Systems can be found in the student planners.

This review has brought about a change in the detention system. Far too many girls were getting too many detentions, to the extent that the after-school detention had become almost meaningless in their eyes. The system is now organised so that nine memo slips will lead to an after-school detention of one hour on a Monday from 3.45-4.45pm. This will almost certainly have involved at an earlier stage a loss of the student's free time at lunchtime on three occasions (three memos + lunchtime detention, either Faculty or Head of Year). In the event of a student being given an after-school detention, parents will be contacted to discuss our concerns and **the detention will be recorded on the end of year school report**. There are some incidents, which are so serious that an after-school detention is automatic. Obviously we hope that this after-school detention will not be used very much and that everyone will act sensibly, considerately and in accordance with our expectations.

Student Planners

Please be reminded that your daughter's planner is to be used as a means of communication between home and school as well as between school and home. When your daughter causes concern (homework not done, uniform issue, behaviour issue) a note will appear in her planner which we would ask you to sign. Clearly, you may also use this means to inform us of issues of concern or points of information.

School Counsellor

As you may already be aware we employ the services of a Counsellor every Friday morning. Her name is Ellie Prior; she has wide experience and formal training in supporting teenagers. In order to speed up the process of referral I ask you to write to your daughter's Head of Year **if you do not want your daughter to be referred to Ellie without your prior agreement**. If we do not hear from you, the Head of Year will assume you are happy for a referral to take place. These sessions are confidential unless Ellie has concerns, which she believes need to be shared with parents and/or the school.

Student Support

Please remind your daughters that Student Support is a service available to all students at the school. It is run by Claire Briefly and Emma Blackwell, two Sixth Formers at the school with the help of the School Counsellor. The service is completely confidential. Students can contact them either by texting 07951 890691 or by emailing studentsupport@ggsg.org.uk and meetings can be arranged for lunchtimes.

Lone Walking between Main and Isaac

Newton sites

From time to time our students may be required to walk on their own to and from either site. Examples when this may occur are late arrival, individual music lessons and appointments with the school counsellor. Unless you tell us otherwise, this could happen. Please contact your daughter's Head of Year if you are unhappy with this arrangement.

Teaching & Learning

This year we are starting some work on Assessment for Learning. This is part of the Key Stage 3 Strategy and is a major national initiative designed to improve assessment practice in all schools. From September the Science and English faculties are piloting several new assessment strategies and will report back to the whole school in the Summer term. Using their recommendations we plan to extend the initiative across all faculties from next year.

The main thrust of the initiative is to give more useful feedback to students in order to help them improve their work. This involves the following strategies:

- Using comments rather than grades on students' work.
- Making assessment criteria explicit to students by writing them in more accessible language.
- Getting students to peer and self assess their own work using grade criteria.

- Using examples of work at different levels annotated with appropriate assessment criteria.
- Making learning objectives and learning outcomes more explicit to students in lessons.

For the purposes of the pilot Science are focusing on Year 10 and English on Years 7 and 8.

Music



All students, who have vocal or instrumental lessons, whether lessons are taken in school or privately, are encouraged to take part in the Music Department's extra-curricular programme. Regular rehearsals take place for the Training Orchestra, Wind band/Senior Orchestra, two choirs, a Clarinet Ensemble and Recorder Ensemble. All groups rehearse weekly at lunch times and lunch passes are available for members to enable them to have lunch early in the lunch hour prior to going to the club. There is music for all standards of player and new members are always welcome to join.

Congratulations!

The following girls passed Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, Guildhall School of Music and Trinity examinations in the Autumn Term. Well done!

<u>Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Instrument</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Emily Cross	8	Flute	3
Philippa Crowe	8	Flute	3*
Melissa Fuller	8	Piano	2**
Sophie Matthews	8	Piano	3
Eleanor Crooks	9	Piano	1*
Hannah Rough	9	Piano	1*
Hannah Parker	11	Alto Sax	5*
Felicity Pilcher	ex-11	Piano	6*
Lucinda Allen	L6	Piano	52*
Paula Nice	U6	Flute	8**
Antonia Kent	ex-U6	Alto Sax	7*

* = with merit ** = with distinction

County success – We have two girls who have recently received confirmation of places in County musical groups. Philippa Arden in Year 11 will play violin in the Kent Schools Orchestra and Melissa Fuller in Year 8 has got into the Kent Youth Choir. Well done to both of you!

P.E.

Summer Term achievements

Athletics

In the North West Kent District League, we came first overall in the Years 7/8 and Years 9/10 sections,



out of ten participating schools. In the North West Kent Competition at Dartford:

The Year 7 team came 2nd out of 7 schools.

The Year 8 team came 4th out of 8 schools.

The Year 9 team came 2nd out of 9 schools.

The Year 10 team came 1st out of 6 schools.

Overall our four teams were placed 1st with 263 points.

Sports day Results

<u>Hockey</u>	<u>Netball</u>	<u>Sports Day (Athletics)</u>
7SS	7SS	7BR
8DF	8DF	8DF
9MM	9MM	9MM
10KJ	10KJ	10KJ
11MC	11HS	L6RB/NM/AS

It has become increasingly difficult to break the existing records on Sports Day, but this year Kelly Cutting in Year 10 ran the 1500m in 6m 23.30 seconds, beating the previous record by 8.5 seconds.

Staff v School matches were held in Netball, Rounders and Tennis, but unfortunately the Sports Day Relay was rained off.

Rebecca Saunders followed up her Gold medal success in the Kent Schools Championships by representing Kent in the English Schools Championships in Newcastle in July, gaining a Gold medal in the discus with a throw of 41.42m. Congratulations to Rebecca on her outstanding achievements this season.

School Games Captains

Hockey – Claire Leeson

Netball – Suzannah Flynn

Tennis – Elaine Loomes

Arethusa 2004

Once again, the PE department ran a very successful trip to the Arethusa Venture Centre for a week in July. Seventy-two Year 9 pupils challenged themselves with outdoor adventurous activities, including climbing, kayaking, sailing, orienteering and high ropes. Everyone learnt a great deal and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. The rest of Year 9 had four days of activities at school or trips, including a day of Duke of Edinburgh activities, self defence, first aid and a trip to the Tate Modern.

The department would like to thank everyone in Year 9 for their enthusiastic participation and all the staff without whom the week would not have been possible.

Fun Run

Last term's Fun Run was the best so far, with just over £4,000 raised. £1,000 will go to the Stepney



Children's Fund and £500 to Jeans for Genes Day. We are discussing how to distribute the rest.

Inter-Form Tournaments

The Year 10 and 11 tournaments were held in the first week of term. Results were:

<u>Year 10 Hockey</u>		<u>Year 10 Netball</u>
10HS	1 st	10HS
10RDE	2 nd	10RDE
10HGM	3 rd	10KB
10KB	4 th	10DP
10DP	5 th	10SD
10SD	6 th	10HGM

<u>Year 11 Hockey</u>		<u>Year 11 Netball</u>
11LD	1 st	11AM
11KJ	2 nd	11SH
11CS	3 rd	11KJ
11AM	4 th	11LD
11SH	5 th	11SG
11SG	6 th	11CS

This term, the Year 9 and 10 Netball teams are playing in the District League. Results have been good so far and the finals night is after half-term. We are also taking part in the District Cross County League.

Collection after matches

A plea to parents to collect your daughters at the time stated after fixtures or training. The PE staff do their best to estimate their return time correctly and have had to wait for as long as 40 minutes this term for pupils whose parents had difficulties in collecting them at the time requested.

Duke of Edinburgh

In July 2004, 42 girls in Years 10 and 11 qualified for their Bronze expedition. Well done for their achievements. Many of them have now completed all four sections of their award and are hoping to go into their Silver and Gold awards this year.

In September, 55 girls from the current Year 10 have signed up to start their Bronze award.

This year we can look forward to many new opportunities being offered in the local area. Courses such as Life Saving, Diving, Babysitting, ICT, Sign language and many more are going to be organised at low costs to assist Duke of Edinburgh participants complete their service, skills and physical recreation sections. These will be offered to both the current and new participants.

All unit leaders within Gravesham have been working closely with the young panel members who represent the young participants from each school and this has proved to be very successful. Thank you to Kirsty MacDowall and Alana O' Kane for their involvement in this and for representing the school.

Readathon

It's almost time for Year 7 to enter the Readathon. This will take place during the week before half-term and involves a lot of reading. Sponsor money should be collected by 19 November 2004. Last year we raised £2121 for the Malcolm Sargent Cancer Care for Sick Children and for the Roald Dahl Foundation, for Sick Children. Gillian Cross, children's author, will be visiting the school during the week. Mrs Foxon will co-ordinate.

School Fund

Reminder

This will be due in by 22 October 2004
£21.00 for one girl
£31.00 for two sisters
£41.00 for three sisters

Calendar

Your copy for this year is attached. I would be grateful if you could arrange holidays and outings during school closure days.

Forthcoming Events

October

19 Year 7 Concert 4.00-4.45pm
20 L6 Connexions Photos 09.30am
22 Science College Launch

25-29 Half-Term

November

8 Senior Prizegiving 2.30pm
9 Development Day – school closed to students
11 Year 7 Parents' Evening 4.00-6.30pm
23 Year 11 Parents' Evening 4.00-6.30pm

December

1 L6 & U6 Parents' Evening 4.00-7.00pm
3 PA Disco: Years 7-9
7 Christmas Concert 7.30pm
8 AL Options Evening: 7-9pm
10 PA Christmas Draw
14 Junior Carols, period 5
16 Carol Service
20 Pantomime
21 End of Term

Newsletter by email

If you have received a paper copy of this newsletter but would prefer to receive it by email in future, please let Mrs Tong-Ralphs, my PA have a copy of your email address. We do wish to join the 21st century and save our trees!

National Schools Partnership

Please see the attached leaflet introducing everyone to the National Schools Partnership in this new school year.

For those of you who were in the school in June, you received details of the InkXpress refillable cartridge offer. Further envelopes can be obtained from Mr Jones.

This term's new scheme is the recycling of mobile phones. If you remove the Sim card, you can then

dispose of your unwanted mobile by dropping it through the letterbox at the Finance Office. The school benefits financially from these schemes, which are also very environmentally friendly.

Yours sincerely



Mrs N Chapman
Headteacher



GRAVESEND GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Please return to your daughter's form tutor by Thursday 21 October 2004

Daughter's name _____

Form _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

Date _____

I acknowledge receipt of the: (please tick)

Newsletter, Issue 1 |

Head's Report |

Calendar |

Information concerning the
School Counsellor and Lone
Walking between sites |

If you would like your Newsletter emailed to you in future please complete your details below. Thank you.

Name: _____ **email address:** _____